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# ENG 2009-002: Literature and Human Values

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*Eastern Illinois University*

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**ENGLISH 2009-002: LITERATURE AND HUMAN VALUES**

**Instructor:** John Allison  
**Office:** 316F, Coleman Hall  
**Phones:** 581-6978 (office); 348-0269 (home)  
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**Office Hours:**

**Objectives of Course:**

- To provide an opportunity to read and discuss central works related to labor, class, and power;
- To encourage reflection about how labor, class, and power can enrich and impoverish our material and psychological life;
- To learn to recognize the shared conventions and purposes of autobiography and fiction related to labor, class, and power;
- To promote independent, critical thinking in discussion and writing;
- To promote the use of reasoning and evidence to support ideas and interpretations;
- To foster competent, well-organized writing.

**Requirements of the Course:**

- Two Essays of Comparative Interpretation (about 4 pages each): 50%;
- In-Class Midterm Examination (Two responses of about 250 words each, one essay of about 500 words): 15%;
- Out-of-Class Final (Two essays of about 600 words each): 25%;
- Contribution to Class Discussion : 10%.

### **Criteria for Evaluating Essays and Examination:**

When I evaluate your essays, I will consider content (depth, reasoning, evidence), coherence (organization, transitions, word choice), grammar, and mechanics. Of these criteria, content is most important, but an essay can fail if it is severely deficient in any one of the criteria. After all, who wants to puzzle through an incoherent message or confront the distractions of an essay riddled with grammatical/mechanical errors. However, when I evaluate examinations, I will place less emphasis on grammar and mechanics.

### **Calculation of the Grade:**

I use a simple percentage scale, along with a letter grade, for each essay and examination. For example, an 88% is a B+, an 85% is a B, and an 84% is a B-. Near the end of the semester, I will determine your participation grade, which will be awarded a percentage as follows: high pass (100%), pass (80%), low pass (65%), and no pass (50%). With the percentages and the weighted components of the course requirements under "Requirements of the Course," you can easily calculate your own grade.

### **Attendance and Grading:**

As Woody Allen once said, showing up is ninety percent of life. After three unexcused absences, you will forfeit one letter grade (10% off the final calculated total for your course grade). For each unexcused absence thereafter, you will forfeit five percent off the final calculated total for your course grade. If for some reason you cannot or will not attend class regularly, you should drop the course.

For an excused absence you must have a verifiable confirmation from Health Service, a medical doctor, an appropriate university employee, or a prospective employer. However, if illness results in nine or more absences, I will expect you to withdraw from the course since you will have missed too much material and discussion to justify credit for the course.

### **Students with Disabilities:**

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

### **NOTES**

## SCHEDULE

1. Week of August 21
  - Introduction to Course
  - Franklin, *Autobiography* (27-37)
  - Autobiography* (37-59)
2. Week of August 28
  - Autobiography* (59-80)
  - Autobiography* (80-98)
  - Autobiography* (98-120)
3. Week of September 4
  - Labor Day: No Classes
  - Autobiography* (120-160)
  - Douglass, *The Life and Times of Frederick Douglass* (Book I, Chapters 1-5)
4. Week of September 11
  - Life and Times* (Chapters 6-15)
  - Life and Times* (Chapters 16-21)
  - Life and Times* (Book II, Chapters 1-5)
5. Week of September 18
  - Life and Times* (Chapters 6-10)
  - Life and Times* (Chapters 11-13)
  - Life and Times* (Chapters 14-19)
6. Week of September 25
  - Dickens *Great Expectations* (23-101)
  - Great Expectations* (102-160)
  - Great Expectations* (160-221)
7. Week of October 2
  - Great Expectations* (221-319)
  - Great Expectations* (319-380)
  - Great Expectations* (380-440)
8. Week of October 9
  - Discussion and Review
  - Midterm: Part I
  - Midterm: Part II
9. Week of October 16
  - Thoreau, *Walden* (258-34)
  - Walden* (334-90)
  - Fall Break! Yahoo!

10. Week of October 23

- Walden* (390-482); **First Essay Due**
- Walden* (482-539)
- Walden* (539-572)

11. Week of October 30

- Dreiser, *Sister Carrie* (Chapters 1-XII)
- Sister Carrie* (Chapters XIII-XIX)
- Sister Carrie* (Chapters XX-XXVII)

12. Week of November 6

- Sister Carrie* (XXVIII-XXXV)
- Sister Carrie* (XXXVI-XLII)
- Sister Carrie* (XLIII-XLVII)

13. Week of November 13

- Review and Discussion
- Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby* (Chapters I-II)
- The Great Gatsby* (Chapters III-IV)

Thanksgiving Recess! Yipee!

14. Week of November 27

- The Great Gatsby* (Chapters V-VI)
- The Great Gatsby* (Chapter VI)
- The Great Gatsby* Chapter VIII-IX)

15. Week of December 4

- Review and Discussion; **Second Essay Due**
- Review and Discussion
- Student Evaluations; Handout of Take-Home Examination